

REMARKS

Claims 1-26 are presently pending in the above-referenced application. In the present office action, the Examiner has required restriction of the application to one of the following allegedly patentably distinct inventions:

Group I invention – as set forth in claims 1-20; and
Group II invention – as set forth in claims 21-26.

In response, Applicants elect (i.e., restrict the application to) the claims within Group I, i.e., claims 1-20.

Additionally, the Examiner asserts in the present office action that the following patentably distinct inventive species are present among claims 1-20:

Species I – Figures 1-6;
Species I(A) – Species I being modified by Figure 11;
Species II – Figures 7-10;
Species II(A) – Species II being modified by Figure 11;
Species III – Figures 12A-12C;
Species IV – Figures 14A-14C;
Species IV(A) – Figure 15;
Species IV(B) – Figure 16;
Species V – Figures 17-19C; and
Species VI – Figures 23-25C

The Examiner also requires election of a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits in the event that no generic claim - claim 1 is indicated as being generic by the Examiner - is finally held to be allowable.

In response, Applicants elect Species II (Figures 7-10) for prosecution in the event that no generic claim is finally held to be allowable.

Lastly, the Examiner requires that Applicants list all of the claims (among claims 1-20) that are readable upon the elected Species, i.e., Species II.

In response, Applicants submit that pending claims 1-3, 5 and 9 read upon Species II.

In conclusion, Applicants submit that this communication is fully responsive to the present office action, and Applicants respectfully request early consideration and allowance of the elected claims of this application.

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By:

Respectfully submitted,

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